



**DATE: 11 JUNE 2015**

## **SOUTH YARRA PRIMARY SCHOOL KIDS CELEBRATE THE IMPORTANCE OF BUDDIES WITH STRICTLY BALLROOM**

This Friday 12 June students from South Yarra Primary are taking a stand against bullying, by celebrating the importance of friendships on National Buddy Day, with special guests Buddy Bear and cast members from Strictly Ballroom.

National Buddy Day is an annual event developed by The Alannah and Madeline Foundation, supported by Principal Partner NAB, to promote awareness of the Foundation's Better Buddies Framework and help reduce bullying in primary schools. Over 1,700 schools are registered to the program and celebrate the day with an array of different activities to help raise funds for the Foundation.

"Better Buddies is integral to our transition program at South Yarra, and it has had such a positive impact on the culture of our school," said Rachel Illingworth teacher at South Yarra Primary School, "Our students are inclusive and have built great cross-year level relationships, which has really helped to ensure our students respect and look out for one another."

The school has an area within their school called 'The Buddy Zone', which was officially opened last year to offer students a quiet place to feel safe and build new friendships.

Strictly Ballroom have been playing their part to reduce bullying in primary schools by donating 100 per cent of any Wednesday evening show proceeds to Better Buddies, and will be joining the students at South Yarra Primary as part of their National Buddy Day celebrations.

Dr Judith Slocombe, CEO, The Alannah and Madeline Foundation, said that thanks to the support of Principal Partner NAB and the generosity of Strictly Ballroom, the Foundation is well on the way towards implementing the Better Buddies Framework across Australia.

"Bullying is a major societal issue in Australia. Twenty-seven per cent of young people report they are bullied every two weeks or more often. The number of school children bullied every fortnight, could fill the MCG," she said.

"Relationship building is key to reducing bullying, and this program enables students to forge new friendships, that might otherwise not have developed, therefore creating a more supportive and inclusive environment."

Students at South Yarra Primary will wear purple on Friday and donate \$2 each to help other schools access the Better Buddies program, in commitment to promoting the values of the framework and the school: caring for others, friendliness, respect, valuing difference and including others.

For over ten years, NAB has worked with The Alannah and Madeline Foundation to prevent bullying in primary schools around the country. This has helped grow the Better Buddies Framework from 30 schools in 2007 to more than 1,700 in 2015, reaching over 510,000 children across Australia.

**For more information** visit: [buddyday.org.au](http://buddyday.org.au) and [betterbuddies.org.au](http://betterbuddies.org.au)

**About The Alannah and Madeline Foundation:** The Alannah and Madeline Foundation is a national charity protecting children from violence and its devastating impact. The Foundation was established in memory of Alannah and Madeline Mikac, aged 6 and 3, who were tragically killed with their mother and 32 others at Port Arthur, Tasmania on 28 April 1996. The Foundation cares for children who have experienced or witnessed violence, and runs programs that help to prevent violence in the lives of children. Our vision is that every child will live in a safe and supportive environment. For more information visit: [www.amf.org.au](http://www.amf.org.au) or call 1300 720 747.

#### **Event Details:**

**What:** National Buddy Day celebrations at South Yarra Primary School with members of the Strictly Ballroom cast

**Where:** South Yarra Primary - 01 Punt Road, South Yarra VIC 3141

**When:** Friday 12 June – 8.55am (for special assembly – introduction of Buddy Bear and Strictly Ballroom cast members say hello to all the students).

**Picture/Vision Opportunities:** Buddy pair (dressed in purple), Buddy Bear, NAB and members of the Strictly Ballroom cast celebrating National Buddy Day – to raise money and awareness of bullying in primary school.

#### **Interviews Opportunities:**

- Buddy pair (prep and year 6)
- Strictly Ballroom cast member
- Judi Fallon, schools program manager at The Alannah and Madeline Foundation
- Principal of South Yarra Primary School, Peter Clifton

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[buddyday.org.au](http://buddyday.org.au)



partnering to prevent bullying